



DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EPISCOPAL CHURCH CENTER • 815 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

Walter H. Boyd, Press Officer
Wm. Drew Dearnaley, Assistant Press Officer

Telephone: (212) 867-8400

81060

February 25, 1981

TENNESSEE ADVANCES TELEVISION PLANS

MEMPHIS -- Tennessee has become one of the first Episcopal dioceses to give serious consideration to television as a medium for diocesan communication. A story in the January Tennessee Churchman reports that by mid-1982 the diocese might be operating as many as five low-power television channels, using \$450,000 in diocesan Venture in Mission funds that have been earmarked for communication. St. Paul's Church, Chattanooga, also plans to apply for a license for an additional low power station.

The Rev. Joe Alford, chairman of the diocesan Venture in Mission Communication Committee, said that once licenses are granted, construction must begin within one year. He said that studio equipment, modestly priced, would fit into space no larger than many parish house classrooms.

Sonia Francis, Radio/Television staff representative at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, noted that the plans are a continuing step in developing the awareness of the potential for electronic media by the Diocese of Tennessee. St. John's parish in Knoxville has been producing material for cable television for some time, and television was used in communicating the diocesan convention.

In a letter to Alford, the Rev. Richard J. Anderson, the Episcopal Church's Executive for Communication, called the Tennessee effort "an excellent example of how dioceses should be thinking and acting" regarding communication.

Anderson said he hoped that in the near future dioceses will have developed a regional network of video outlets that could be served by the Episcopal Church Center communication staff in much the same way diocesan newspapers are now served.

The Rev. Robert M. G. Libby of Jacksonville, Fla., assisted the Tennessee Episcopalians in their planning for television ministry. A former communication staff member at the Church Center, Libby called the \$450,000 Venture in Mission allocation in Tennessee "the largest sum ever earmarked for that purpose anywhere in the Episcopal Church." He made several suggestions for using television in relationship with other media forms for evangelism and information sharing purposes.

#####

DP, DX

